



# NEWS RELEASE

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**Release Date:** August 19, 1999  
**Release Number:** 99-67

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## ***NEW PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS WILL HELP SBA REACH MINORITY SMALL BUSINESSES***

**WASHINGTON** – U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Administrator Aida Alvarez today signed historic partnership agreements with three leading national African-American organizations that will help the agency deliver its small business financing, technical assistance, contracting and other programs to minority entrepreneurs.

The agreements were signed today at the Washington, D.C., headquarters of the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW), whose leaders signed the agreement with Administrator Alvarez. Also signing agreements with Alvarez today were representatives of the National Association of Black Accountants and the Phelps Stokes Fund.

“These agreements will help ensure more Americans a seat at the nation’s economic table,” Administrator Alvarez said. “Combining the resources of the SBA with the networks of these influential and vigorous organizations sends a powerful message that we’re serious about all Americans sharing in our economic prosperity.

“In the midst of this great economic expansion – 100 consecutive months of economic growth, we are obligated to help make sure the doors to opportunity are wide open for everyone. Because if we can’t find a way to give every single hard-working American family the chance to participate in the future we are building for this country, during this time of great prosperity – then we’ll never get around to it.”

“These partnership agreements commit us all to the hard work of increasing participation by African-American entrepreneurs in SBA’s capital access, procurement, international trade, advocacy, welfare-to-work and women-owned business programs,” Administrator Alvarez said. “SBA’s role is to make sure that access – access to credit, access to technical assistance, and access to federal contracts – is part of the solution, not part of the problem.”

The NCNW is a voluntary nonprofit organization that helps African-American women find ways to improve the quality of life for themselves, their families and communities. Through a network of community-based organizations, the NCNW has outreach capability to four million women.

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The National Association of Black Accountants (NABA) is a professional membership organization representing African-American accountants. Its efforts support an estimated 200,000 minority accountants throughout the United States.

The Phelps Stokes Fund was founded in 1911 with the aim of improving access to quality education for African-Americans, Native Americans, Africans and needy and deserving white students.

NCNW President Dr. Jane Smith and Dr. Dorothy Height signed today's partnership agreements on behalf of the NCNW. George Willie signed on behalf of NABA, and Glenwood Roane signed for the Phelps Stokes Fund.

Today's partnership agreements state that the SBA, NCNW, NABA and the Phelps Stokes Fund will combine their efforts to reach out to African-Americans who may benefit from SBA services and to help more small firms succeed.

The SBA's African-American outreach effort is part of a broader initiative by the SBA to reach New Markets—those markets that have not fully participated in our economic prosperity—such as women and minorities, as well as businesses located in distressed rural and urban areas. Similar agreements have been signed with a number of national organizations, including the Urban League, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the National Association of Women Business Owners and the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

The effort was developed in support of President Clinton's desire to promote racial reconciliation through increased economic opportunity. These national partnership agreements also help forge stronger relationships between SBA district offices, local chambers, and other SBA resource partners as well as the participating organization's local chapters.

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*The U.S. Small Business Administration, established in 1953, provides financial, technical and management assistance to help Americans start, run, and grow their businesses. With a portfolio of direct and guaranteed business loans and disaster loans worth more than \$45 billion, SBA is the nation's largest single financial backer of small businesses. Last year, SBA offered management and technical assistance to more than one million small business owners. SBA also plays a major role in the government's disaster relief efforts by making low-interest recovery loans to both homeowners and businesses.*

*For more information about SBA programs, visit the SBA website at [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov), or call the SBA Answer Desk at 1-800-U-ASK-SBA.*

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